

## CLAIMS

I claim:

1. (amended) A cover for protecting Deglet Noor dates from birds, rain, insects, wind, and sunburn while on the palm, which comprises:
  - (a) said cover being in the shape of a bag;
  - (b) said bag being of ample size to enclose a bunch;
  - (c) said bag being composed of a flexible fabric which allows free circulation of air throughout the fruit cluster, yet excludes insects and birds, provides a windbreak, and partially shades said bunch;
  - (d) said fabric made of water-repellant, UV resistant fiber; and
  - (e) means for anchoring the top of said bag to the fruitstalk of said bunch.
2. (amended) The cover of claim 1 wherein said fabric is white, woven, open-mesh polyester having a weight of about 86 to 113 grams per square meter (2.5 to 3.3 ounces per square yard).
3. (amended) The cover of claim 1 wherein said fabric has a cloth count of approximately 13 warps by 10 fills per square centimeter (32 warps by 26 fills per square inch).
5. A method for protecting Deglet Noor dates from birds, rain, insects, wind, and sunburn, while on the palm, which comprises the steps of:
  - (a) providing a cover for said dates, said cover being in the shape of a bag, said bag being of ample size to enclose a bunch and composed of a flexible fabric which allows free circulation of air throughout the fruit cluster, yet excludes insects and birds, provides a windbreak, and partially shades said bunch, said fabric being made of water-repellant, UV resistant fiber;
  - (b) slipping said bag over the bunch;
  - (c) wrapping the upper portion of said bag in a spiraling fashion to form concentric overlapping layers around the upper portion of said bunch, whereby a hood is formed, such that the upper portion of said bunch is shaded, and said fruit cluster is protected from rain; and
  - (d) providing means for anchoring the top of said bag in a tightly closed condition around the bottom of the fruitstalk, so as to completely enclose said bunch.
6. (amended) A method for protecting Deglet Noor dates from birds, rain, insects, wind, and sunburn, while on the palm, which comprises the steps of:
  - (a) providing a cover for said dates, said cover being in the shape of a bag, said bag being of

- ample size to enclose a bunch and composed of a flexible fabric which allows free circulation of air throughout the fruit cluster, yet excludes insects and birds, provides a windbreak, and partially shades said bunch, said fabric being made of water-repellant, UV resistant fiber;
- (b) slipping said bag over the bunch;
  - (d) puckering the middle portion of said bag around the bottom of the fruitstalk;
  - (e) providing means for anchoring approximately the middle of said bag in a tightly closed condition around the bottom of said fruitstalk, so as to completely enclose said bunch; and
  - (f) folding down and over the top of said bunch the portion of said bag protruding above where said bag is anchored to said fruitstalk, so as to form an umbrella-like structure, such that the upper portion of said bunch is shaded, and said fruit cluster is protected from rain.

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